

### 13. PAINTED SPURFOWL, *GALLOPERDIX LUNULATA* (VALENCIENNES) IN RAJASTHAN

Ali and Ripley (1980) while describing distribution of Painted Spurfowl *Galloperdix lunulata* (Valenciennes) mentioned "Not in Rajasthan....". During my studies on the birds of Sariska National Park, I found it to be common in the forests of Sariska (Sharma 1981). Subsequently, I also observed it in the Jamwa Ramgarh Sanctuary in Jaipur district. Studies of BNHS revealed its presence at Keoladeo Ghana of Bharatpur (Vijayan 1987).

Dharmakumarsinhji observed and photo-

graphed Painted Spurfowl in Ranthambhore National Park (Dharmakumarsinhji and Lavkumar 1972). In June 1992, I observed this bird in the contiguous forests of Ranthambhore National Park, Kailadevi Sanctuary, Sawai Man Singh Sanctuary and Ramgarh Sanctuary of Sawai Madhopur and Bundi districts.

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### 14. FIRST RECORD OF FRESH WATER CRAB *PARATELPHUSA* SPP. IN THE BARN OWL'S *TYTO ALBA* (SCOPOLI) DIET IN TRANQUEBAR TALUK, TAMIL NADU, SOUTH INDIA

Barn owl's (*Tyto alba*) diet consists exclusively of rodents and other small mammals (Evans and Emlen 1947, Colvin and McLean 1986) such as shrews, moles, gophers, rabbits, mice, rats, flying squirrels, opossums, lemmings (Parmalee and Klippel 1991), dibbler and dunnart (Dickman *et al.* 1991). Barn owl pellets occasionally revealed the presence of birds and insects (Evans and Emlen 1947) and frogs (Parmalee and Klippel 1991). We have also observed that the barn owl's diet consist of rats, mice, gerbils and shrews. While analysing the pellets of barn owl collected from different nesting sites in Tranquebar Taluk, we had seen the appendages of crab (*Paratelphusa* sp.) as prey remains from a nesting site at Sri Sarntharaikata Swamy temple, Thillaiyadi, during June 1993, and

the pellets collected from the site also contained the thoracic chitinous shells and a pair of chelae of freshwater crab. These nocturnal freshwater crabs inhabit the adjoining agricultural lands along with rats. So it may be speculated that the barn owl might have hunted the crabs from the agricultural lands and brought them to the nesting sites for consumption. No such earlier record is available so far from any other region. This observation encourages us to include the crab as one of the food items in the Barn owl's diet.

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